

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3703
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USLO RIYADH

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7707

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, EG, SY, IS, JO
SUBJECT: PALESTINIANS AND THE PEACE PROCESS

REF: (A) CAIRO 14966; (B) JERUSALEM 1659

1. WE NOTE EMBASSY CAIRO'S CONCERN THAT EGYPTIANS MAY
FEEL THAT THE US HAS BEEN NEGLECTING PALESTINIAN IN-
TERESTS. THIS MAY BE THE VIEW OF SOME, BUT WE DO NOT BE-
LIEVE THAT THIS DELICATE STAGE OF THE PEACE PROCESS IS A
TIME TO RAISE OUR PROFILE WITH RESPECT TO THE PALESTINIANS.
ISRAELIS WOULD SEIZE ON ANY OBVIOUS NEW INITIATIVES BY
THE US ON THIS ISSUE AS CONFIRMATION OF THEIR ALREADY
ACUTE SUSPICION THAT WASHINGTON IS SHIFTING AWAY FROM ISRAEL
TO A MORE PRO-PALESTINIAN AND PRO-ARAB STANCE AND CAN NO LONGER
BE AN HONEST BROKER IN THE PEACE PROCESS. AS WE ALL
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KEEP SAYING, THE ATTITUDES OF ISRAELIS ARE THE CRUCIAL
FACTOR IN WHETHER WE MOVE FORWARD TOWARD A PEACE SETTLE-
MENT OR NOT. IN OUR VIEW, WHATEVER BENEFITS WE MIGHT GET
BY REACHING OUT FURTHER TO MODERATE PALESTINIANS DURING
THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WOULD BE FAR OUTWEIGHED BY MORE PROBLEMS
WITH THE ISRAELIS, PROBLEMS WHICH WE SHOULD NOT INVITE.

2. IN ANY CASE, WASHINGTON HAS HARDLY BEEN MUTE ON THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE OR UNINVOLVED IN THEIR WELL-BEING. RECENT US PUBLIC REFERENCES TO PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, REFERENCES EXEMPLIFIED IN HAL SAUNDERS HOUSE COMMITTEE TESTIMONY AND ROY ATHERTON'S LOS ANGELES SPEECH, HAVE DRAMATICALLY DEPARTED FROM THE US POSTURE OF THE NOT SO DISTANT PAST EVEN IF THE ARABS NOW ASK WHAT WE HAVE DONE FOR THE PALESTINIANS LATELY. MOREOVER, WE ALREADY PROVIDE EXTENSIVE ECONOMIC AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIANS THROUGH UNRWA, THE MESREF AND P.L. 480 PROGRAMS ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR LEBANON (WHICH IS SHARED WITH PALESTINIANS), AS WELL AS THE EXISTING IV PROGRAM (WHICH HAS SENT MAYOR MILHIM OF HALHUL TO THE US AND WILL BE SENDING OTHER MAYORS SOON). TO LOOK FOR ADDITIONAL GESTURES AT THIS MOMENT STRIKES AS SELF-DEFEATING TO OUR OVERALL OBJECTIVES IF THE US GOAL REMAINS TO NUDGE THE GOI TO FACE UP TO ITS HARD CHOICES. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE FEAR THAT ANY OF THE SUGGESTIONS IN PARA 3 REF (B) WOULD ASSUME NEGATIVE SYMBOLIC CHARACTER HERE OUT OF ALL PROPORTION TO THEIR POSSIBLE UTILITY IN ENCOURAGING PALESTINIAN MODERATION.

LEWIS

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